A Seasonable

VINDICATION

OF THE

B. Trinity.

Being an Answer to this Question, *Why do you believe the Doctrine of the Trinity?*

Collected from the Works of the Most Reverend,

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Late Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*.

And the Right Reverend,

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THE PREFACE.

OUR Modern *Socinians* (who are pleased to call themselves *Unitarians*) having not only Disputed, but most Blasphemously Ridiculed the Doctrine of the *B. Trinity*; for the Conviction of such *Gainsayers*, and the Confirmation of *Others*, it is thought fit to Publish the following Discourse, faithfully Collected from the Learned Works of *Archbishop* TILLOTSON, and *Bishop* STILLINGFLEET.

Concerning *Biſhop* STILLINGFLEET, I ſhall ſay nothing, becauſe he is alive to Anſwer for himſelf. But as to *Archbiſhop* TILLOTSON, I hope it will appear even from this Collection, 'That his *Grace* 'was very far from being a *So-* 'cinian; however his Memory 'hath been very unworthily Re- 'proached in that, as well as 'other Reſpects, ſince his Death.

A VINDICATION OF THE *B. TRINITY.*

Q. *WHY do you believe the Doctrine of the Trinity?*

A. Because it is a very Rational Doctrine, that is, there is the highest Reason to believe it.

Q. *What do yo mean by this word* Trinity? *And, What Doctrines concerning it are propoſed to our Belief?*

A. I ſhall Anſwer this Queſtion in the very words of the Church of *England*; Whoſe Doctrine, I am fully perſwaded, is Orthodox and Catholick.

There is but one living and true God, everlaſting, without Body, Parts, or Paſſions; of infinite Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs, the Maker and Preſerver of all things both viſible and inviſible. And in Unity of this Godhead there be Three Perſons, of One Subſtance, Power and Eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt. Art. 1.

The

The Catholick Faith is this, That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the Persons; nor dividing the Substance. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the Glory equal; the Majesty coeternal. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not Three Gods, but One God. Athan. Creed.

It is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we should at all times, and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord Almighty, Everlasting God. Who art One God,

God, one Lord; not one only Person, but three Persons in one Substance. For that which we believe of the Glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality. Pref. on the Feast of Trinity.

O holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, Three Persons and One God, have mercy upon us miserable Sinners. Lit.

This is what we believe concerning the Trinity. And that this is very Rational Doctrine; and that we have the highest Reason thus to believe, I shall endeavour to evince, when I have first explained the Nature of *Faith* in General, by shewing,

What

What it is to *Believe*; and what this act *Believe* doth denote when applied to any Object.

Q. *What is Faith, or Belief in General?*

A. 'Belief in general I define 'to be, *an Assent to that which is 'Credible as Credible.* V. Bishop *Pearson* on the Creed, p. 2.

Q. *What is meant by this word Assent?*

A. 'By the word *Assent* is ex-'pressed that Act or Habit of 'the Understanding, by which 'it receiveth, acknowledgeth, and 'embraceth any thing as a Truth, *Id. Ib.*

Q. *But*

Q. *But are there not ſeveral other kinds of Aſſent, beſides Faith, by which the Soul doth receive and embrace whatſoever appeareth to be true?*

A. 'This Aſſent, or Judgment 'of any thing to be true, being 'a general Act of the Under-'ſtanding, is applicable to other 'Habits thereof as well as to 'Faith. *Id. Ib.*

Q. *How then is this Aſſent which we call Faith, ſpecified and diſtinguiſhed from thoſe other kinds of Aſſent?*

A. 'It muſt be ſpecified as all 'other Acts are, by its proper 'Object. *Id. Ib.*

Q. *What*

Q. *What is this Object of Faith?*

A. This Object of Faith is that which is *Credible as Credible.*

Q. *Why do you repeat the word* Credible, *and say* Credible *as* Credible?

A. To denote the twofold Object of Faith, *viz. Material* and *Formal.*

Q. *What is the* Material *Object of Faith?*

A. The Material Object of Faith, is the thing to be believed, or something which is credible.

Q. *What is the* Formal *Object of Faith?*

A. That

A. That whereby it is believed, or the Reaſon why it is believed.

Q. *What is it to be Credible?*

A. 'That is properly *Credible*, 'which is not apparent of it ſelf '(either in reſpect of our Senſes 'or Underſtanding) nor certainly 'to be collected, either antece-'dently by its Cauſe, or reverſe-'ly by its Effect, and yet though 'by none of theſe ways, hath 'the Atteſtation of a Truth. *V. Biſhop* Pearſon, *p.* 3.

Q. *What then is that kind of Aſſent, which is called Faith?*

A. 'When any thing pro-'pounded to us is neither appa-'rent

'rent to our Senſe, nor evident 'to our Underſtanding in and 'of it ſelf; neither certainly to 'be collected from any clear and 'neceſſary Connexion with the 'Cauſe from which it proceed-'eth, or the Effects which it na-'turally produceth; nor is taken 'up upon any real Arguments 'or Relations to other acknow-'ledged Truths; and yet not-'withſtanding appeareth to us 'true, not by a Manifeſtation 'but Atteſtation of the Truth; 'and ſo moveth us to aſſent, not 'of it ſelf, but by virtue of the 'Teſtimony given to it. In plain terms; When we therefore acknowledge a thing to be true, for this only reaſon, becauſe we are

are told that it is ſo: Then, and in ſuch a Caſe we do properly *believe* it. And the Aſſent that we give to ſuch a Truth thus atteſted, is neither *Stience* nor *Opinion*, but *Faith*. *Id. Ib.*

Q. *The nature of Faith in general being thus explained, I am now prepared to be inſtructed by you in this important Queſtion; Why do you believe the Doctrine of the Trinity?*

A. Though this Doctrine of the Trinity, *viz. That there are Three diſtinct Perſons in One and the ſame undivided Divine Eſſence*, is neither apparent to my Senſe, nor evident to my Underſtanding (for being a great Myſtery,

I could

I could never have known it, unleſs it had been Revealed; and now it is Revealed, I am not able to comprehend it) yet ſince it is teſtified and declared by an All-knowing, and moſt juſt and faithful God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, I do therefore give my Aſſent unto it, as a moſt credible Truth, and as ſuch, I do firmly believe it.

Now that God, who is infinite in Wiſdom and Knowledge, doth fully know himſelf, and perfectly underſtand his own Nature: And alſo, that *He* who is infinitely Good and Faithful cannot deceive us (*for it is im-*

possible for God to Lye) this I shall not pretend to prove, but can fairly suppose it, as being granted by the *Socinians* themselves. The only thing therefore for *us* to prove, and which *they* deny, is this, *viz. That the Doctrine of the Trinity is Revealed by Almighty God.* For if we can make it appear, that an infinitely Wise and Faithful God hath Revealed it; we shall then easily convince them, That there is the highest Reason to believe it.

Q. *How then do you prove that God hath Revealed it? Where hath God told us, That there are Three distinct Persons, in the same undivided*

divided Divine Essence and Nature?

A. Were I to Discourse an *Atheist*, or a *Deist*, then, since all Conviction must be *ex concessis*, I ought to prove these *Two* Things,

1. *The Possibility and Necessity of Divine Revelation.*

2. *That the Books of the* Old *and* New Testament, *which by way of Eminency we call the Scriptures, do contain this Divine Revelation. And that in these Books God hath Revealed so much of his own Nature, as is necessary for us to know in order to our Salvation.*

But ſince theſe *Unitarians* do profeſs themſelves Chriſtians, and conſequently to believe the Holy Scriptures, I ſhall have ſo much Charity for them at preſent, as to ſuppoſe it: And ſhall treat them as ſuch. And then the only thing I am to prove, is this, *viz.* That the Doctrine of the Trinity is Revealed in the Scriptures.

Q. *But neither the word* Trinity, *nor the word* Perſon *are to be found in Scripture. How then can you pretend to prove a Trinity of Perſons from the Scriptures?*

A. 'Though neither the word 'Trinity, nor perhaps *Perſon*, in 'the

'the Senſe in which it is uſed
'by *Divines* when they treat of
'this *Myſtery*, be any where to
'be met with in *Scripture*; yet
'it cannot be denied but that
'*Three* are there ſpoken of by
'the Names of *Father*, *Son*, and
'*Holy Ghoſt*, in whoſe Name
'every *Chriſtian* is Baptized, and
'to each of whom the higheſt
'*Titles* and *Properties* of *God* are
'in *Scripture* attributed. And
'theſe *Three* are ſpoken of
'with as much diſtinction from
'one another, as we uſe to
'ſpeak of *Three* ſeveral Per-
'ſons.

'So that though the word
'*Trinity* be not found in *Scri-*
'*pture*, yet theſe *Three* are there

'expreſly and frequently men-
'tioned. And *Trinity* is no-
'thing but *Three* of any Thing.
'And ſo likewiſe though the word
'*Perſon* be not there expreſly
'applied to *Father*, *Son*, and
'*Holy Ghoſt*; yet it will be very
'hard to find a more conveni-
'ent word whereby to expreſs
'the diſtinction of theſe *Three*.
'For which reaſon I could ne-
'ver yet ſee any juſt Cauſe to
'quarrel at this *Term*. For ſince
'the Holy Spirit of God in
'*Scripture* hath thought fit in
'ſpeaking of theſe *Three* to di-
'ſtinguiſh them from one ano-
'ther, as we uſe in common
'Speech to diſtinguiſh *Three*
'ſeveral *Perſons*, I cannot
'ſee

'ſee any reaſon why in the 'Explication of this *Myſtery*, 'which purely depends upon 'Divine Revelation, we ſhould 'not ſpeak of it in the ſame 'manner as the *Scripture* doth. 'And though the word *Perſon* 'is now become a *Term of Art*, 'I ſee no cauſe why we ſhould 'decline it, ſo long as we mean 'by it neither more nor leſs 'than what the *Scripture* ſays 'in other words. *V.* Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*'s Sermon on 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *p.* 19.

'Here then I fix my foot: 'That there are *Three* Differen- 'ces in the *Deity*, which the 'Scripture ſpeaks of by the 'Names of *Father*, *Son*, and

'*Holy Ghoſt*, and every where 'ſpeaks of them as we uſe to 'do of *Three* diſtinct Perſons. 'And therefore I ſee no reaſon 'why in this Argument we 'ſhould nicely abſtain from 'uſing the word Perſon. *Id.* Sermon II. on *John* 1. 14. *p.* 120.

Q. *You confeſs then that the word* Trinity *is not to be found in Scripture. However, (may theſe* Unitarians *reply) Have you not found it in the* Athanaſian *Creed? And becauſe the Church of* England *hath owned this Creed, by taking it into her Liturgy, that you may approve your Selves true Sons of the Church, therefore,* ſay they, *you are*

are resolved to Defend it. V. Pref. to Mr. *Milb. p.* 7.

'*A.* *We assert Three Persons in* '*the Godhead*, Not because we 'find them in the *Athanasian* '*Creed*; but because the Scri- 'pture hath Revealed that there 'are *Three*, Father, Son, and 'Holy Ghost, to whom the 'Divine Nature and Attributes 'are given. This we verily Be- 'lieve, that the Scripture hath 'Revealed; and that there are 'a great many Places, of 'which we think no tolera- 'ble Sense can be given with- 'out it, and therefore we as- 'sert this Doctrine on the same 'Grounds, on which we believe

'the

'the Scriptures. And if there 'are *Three Perſons* which have 'the *Divine Nature* attributed 'to them; what muſt we do 'in this Caſe? Muſt we caſt 'off the *Unity of the Divine* '*Eſſence*? No, that is too fre-'quently and plainly aſſerted 'for us to call it into Queſti-'on. Muſt we reject thoſe 'Scriptures which attribute Di-'vinity to the Son and Holy 'Ghoſt, as well as to the Fa-'ther? That we cannot do, 'unleſs we caſt off thoſe Books 'of Scripture, wherein thoſe 'things are contained. V. *Biſhop* Stillingfleet's *Vind. of the Trinity*, *p.* 112.

Q. *But*

Q. *But is it not trifling to prove a Doctrine by Scripture, which* (as the *Socinians* pretend) *is contrary to Reason? It being a known Rule* (*which I shall express in the words of* Bishop *Stillingfleet*) That, '*Whatever speaks* 'a direct *Repugnancy to any of* 'the *Fundamental Dictates of* 'Nature, *cannot be of Divine* 'Revelation. V. Orig. Sacr. *p.* 172. 'For the *Law of Nature, and of* 'Right *Reason, imprinted in our* 'hearts, *is as truly the Law and* 'Word of *God, as is that which* 'is printed in our *Bibles.* V. Bishop *Sanderson's* Ser. 4. ad Cl. p. 78. *And therefore since Truth is never contrary to it self, is it not impertinent to prove this Doctrine*

ctrine of the Trinity by the Scriptures, which is not only above *Reaſon, but plainly* contrary *to it?*

'*A.* As to its being *above* 'Reaſon, which they are loth 'to admit any thing to be; 'this I think will bear no great 'Diſpute: Becauſe if they would 'be pleaſed to ſpeak out, they 'can mean no more by this, 'but that our *Reaſon* is not able 'fully to comprehend it. But 'what then? Are there no *My-* '*ſteries* in Religion? *That* I am 'ſure they will not ſay, becauſe 'God, whoſe Infinite Nature and 'Perfections, are the very foun- 'dation of all Religion, is cer- 'tainly the greateſt *Myſtery* of 'all

'all other, and the moſt in-
'comprehenſible. But *we* muſt
'not, nay *they* will not for this
'reaſon deny, that there is ſuch
'a Being as God. And there-
'fore if there be *Myſteries* in
'Religion, it is no reaſonable
'Objection againſt them, that
'we cannot fully comprehend
'them: Becauſe all *Myſteries*,
'in what kind ſoever, whether
'in *Religion*, or in *Nature*, ſo
'long, and ſo far as they are
'*Myſteries*, are for that very
'reaſon incomprehenſible. *Vid.*
Archbiſhop Tillotſon, *Serm. II. on*
Joh. 1. 14. *p.* 117.

'I deſire it may be conſi-
'dered, That it is not repug-
'nant to Reaſon to believe

'ſome-

'ſome things which are incom-
'prehenſible by our Reaſon;
'provided that we have ſuffici-
'ent ground and reaſon for the
'belief of them: Eſpecially if
'they be concerning *God*, who
'is in his Nature *Incomprehenſi-*
'*ble*; and we be well aſſured
'that he hath revealed them.
'And therefore it ought not to
'offend us, that theſe *Diffe-*
'*rences* in the *Deity* are incom-
'prehenſible by our finite Un-
'derſtandings; becauſe the *Di-*
'*vine Nature* it ſelf is ſo, and
'yet the belief of *that* is the
'Foundation of all Religion.

'There are a great many
'things in *Nature* which we
'cannot comprehend, how they

'either

'either are, or can be. *Id. Ser. on* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *pag.* 22.

'For my own part, I confeſs it to be my Opinion, 'that we converſe every day 'with very many things, none 'of which we comprehend. 'Who is he that comprehends 'either the Structure, or the 'Reaſon of the Powers of Seminal Forms or *Seeds*? Or 'how the Parts of Matter hold 'together? Or how, being in 'their own nature *Lifeleſs* and '*Senſleſs*, they do (for all 'that) in ſome Poſitures and 'Textures, acquire Life, Senſation, and even Volition, 'Memory and Reaſon? Or 'how the Sun and other vaſt

'Heavenly

'Heavenly Fires subsist for so 'many Ages, without any Nou-'rishment or Fuel; which Fire, 'of all other Bodies, most re-'quires? Or how, when the 'Sun arrives at the Tropicks, 'he never goes further, either '*Northward* or *Southward*, but 'returns towards the *Equator*, 'and thereby preserves the 'World by his Vital Warmth? *V. Consider. on the Trinity, to* H. H. *p.* 4.

'There are many things 'likewise in our *Selves*, which 'no man is able in any mea-'sure to comprehend, as to the 'manner how they are done 'and performed. As the *Vital* '*Union* of *Soul* and *Body*. Who

'can

'can imagine by what device
'or means a *Spirit* comes to
'be ſo cloſely united, and ſo
'firmly link'd to a *Material*
'*Body*, that they are not to
'be parted without great force
'and violence offer'd to Na-
'ture? The like may be ſaid
'of the Operations of our ſe-
'veral *Faculties* of *Senſe* and
'*Imagination*, of *Memory* and
'*Reaſon*, and eſpecially of the
'*Liberty* of our *Wills*. And yet
'we certainly find all theſe Fa-
'culties in our ſelves, though
'we cannot either comprehend
'or explain the particular man-
'ner in which the ſeveral Ope-
'rations of them are perform-
'ed.

'And if we cannot comprehend the manner of those 'Operations, which we plainly perceive and feel to be in 'our *Selves*, much less can we 'expect to comprehend things 'without us; and least of all 'can we pretend to comprehend 'the infinite *Nature* and *Perfections* of *God*, and every thing 'belonging to him.

'Thus you see, by these *Instances*, that it is not repugnant to Reason to believe a 'great many things to be, of 'the manner of whose Existence we are not able to give 'a particular and distinct account. And much less is it 'repugnant to Reason to believe

'lieve those things concerning 'God, which we are very well 'assured he hath declared con-'cerning himself, though these 'things by our Reason should 'be incomprehensible.

'And this is truly the Case as 'to the matter now under de-'bate. We are sufficiently as-'sured that the *Scriptures* are a '*Divine Revelation*, and that 'this *Mystery* of the *Trinity* is 'therein declared to us. Now 'that we cannot comprehend 'it, is no sufficient Reason not 'to believe it. For if it were 'a good Reason for not be-'lieving it, then no Man ought 'to believe that there is a God, 'because his Nature is most

'moſt certainly incomprehenſi-
'ble. But we are aſſured by
'many Arguments that there is
'a God; and the ſame *natural*
'*Reaſon* which aſſures us, that
'*He is*, doth likwiſe aſſure us
'that *He is incomprehenſible*;
'and therefore our believing him
'to be ſo, doth by no means
'overthrow our Belief of his Be-
'ing.

'In like manner, we are aſ-
'ſured by *Divine Revelation* of
'the truth of this Doctrine of
'the *Trinity*: and being once
'aſſured of *that*, our not be-
'ing able fully to comprehend
'it, is not reaſon enough to
'ſtagger our belief of it. A
'Man cannot deny what he
'ſees,

'ſees, though the neceſſary con-
'ſequence of admitting it, may
'be ſomething which he can-
'not comprehend. One can-
'not deny the frame of this
'World which he ſees with his
'eyes, though from thence it
'will neceſſarily follow, that
'either *that* or ſomething elſe
'muſt be of it ſelf: Which
'yet is a thing, which no man
'can comprehend how it can
'be.

'And by the ſame Reaſon
'a man muſt not deny what
'God ſays, to be true; though
'he cannot comprehend many
'things which God ſays: As
'particularly concerning this *My-*
'*ſtery* of the *Trinity*. It ought

'then to satisfy us that there is 'sufficient Evidence, that this 'Doctrine is delivered in *Scrip-* 'ture, and that what is there 'declared concerning it, doth 'not imply a Contradiction. 'For why should our *finite* Un- 'derstandings pretend to com- 'prehend that which is *infinite*, 'or to Know all the real *Dif-* 'ferences that are consistent with 'the *Unity* of an Infinite Being; 'or to be able fully to explain 'this *Mystery* by any similitude 'or resemblance taken from *fi-* 'nite *Beings*? V. Archbishop *Tillotson*'s Serm. on 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. p. 23.

'Great *Difficulty* I acknow- 'ledge there is in the explica- 'tion

'tion of it, in which the fur-
'ther we go, beyond what God
'hath thought fit to reveal to us
'in *Scripture* concerning it, the
'more we are entangled; and
'that which men are pleaſed to
'call an explaining of it, does,
'in my apprehenſion, often
'make it more obſcure, that is,
'leſs plain than it was before.
'Which does not ſo very well
'agree with a pretence of *Ex-*
'*plication.* Id. Ser. on *Joh.* 1. 14.
p. 119.

'And therefore, though ſome
'Learned and Judicious Men
'may have very commendably
'attempted a more particular
'Explication of this great *My-*
'*ſtery* by the ſtrength of *Reaſon*,

'yet I dare not pretend to 'that, knowing both the diffi-'culty and danger of ſuch an 'Attempt, and mine own inſuf-'ficiency for it.

'All that I ever deſigned up-'on this Argument, was to 'make out the Credibility of 'the Thing from the Authority 'of the *Holy Scriptures*; with-'out deſcending to a more par-'ticular explication of it than 'the *Scripture* hath given us: 'Leſt by endeavouring to lay 'the *Difficulties* which are alrea-'dy ſtarted about it, new ones 'ſhould be raiſed, and ſuch as 'may, perhaps, be much hard-'er to be removed, than thoſe 'we have now to grapple withal.

'Nor

'Nor indeed do I see that it is 'any ways necessary to do more; 'it being sufficient that God hath 'declared what he thought fit in 'this matter, and that we do 'firmly believe what he says 'concerning it to be true, though 'we do not perfectly compre-'hend the meaning of all that 'he hath said about it. *Id. Ser. on* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *p.* 17.

Q. *But these* Unitarians *do urge the matter much further, and pretend; That this Mystery of the Trinity, now under debate, is not only* above *Reason, but plainly* contrary *to Reason. For this they expostulate with the Bishop of* Worcester.

'He

'He utterly miſtakes (*to give 'you their own words*) in Think-'ing, that we deny the Arti-'cles of the *New Chriſtianity*, 'or *Athanaſian Religion*, becauſe 'they are *Myſteries*, or *becauſe 'we do not comprehend them*; we 'deny them, *becauſe we do com-'prehend them*; we have *a clear 'and diſtinct perception*, that they 'are not *Myſteries*, but *Contra-'dictions*, *Impoſſibilities*, and pure '*Nonſenſe*. V. Conſid. on Expl. of the Trinity, in a Letter to *H. H.* p. 4.

Now what Reply hath his Lord-ſhip made to this?

'*A.* This is a very bold 'Charge, and not very be-'coming the Modeſty and De-

'cency

'cency of ſuch, who know at 'the ſame time that they op- 'poſe the Religion publickly 'eſtabliſhed, and in ſuch things 'which they look on as ſome 'of the principal Articles of 'the Chriſtian Faith. *V. Vind. of the Trinity.* p. 54.

'Theſe words contain in 'them ſo *ſpiteful*, ſo *unjuſt*, and 'ſo *unreaſonable* a Charge upon 'the Chriſtian Church in ge- 'neral, and our own in parti- 'cular, that I could not but 'think my ſelf concerned, eſ- 'pecially ſince they are Addreſ- 'ſed to me, to do what in me 'lay (as ſoon as my uncertain 'State of Health would per- 'mit) towards the clearing the

'Fun-

'Fundamental *Myſtery of the* 'Athanaſian Religion, as they 'call it, *viz. The Doctrine of* 'the *Trinity*, which is chiefly 'ſtruck at by them. *V. Pref. p.* 2.

Q. 'Tis a ſeaſonable Service to the Chriſtian Church in general, and our own in particular, that a Perſon ſo eminent for Learning and Prudence, hath at this juncture undertaken the Defence of the B. Trinity. But in what manner doth his Lordſhip propoſe to Defend it?

A. 'Without running into 'any *new Explications*, or lay-'ing aſide any *old Terms*, for 'which

'which he could not ſee any
'juſt occaſion.

'For however thoughtful Men
'may think to eſcape ſome par-
'ticular Difficulties better, by
'going out of the common
'Roads; yet they may meet
'with others, which they did
'not foreſee, which may make
'them as well as Others judge
'it, at laſt, a wiſer and ſafer
'courſe to keep in the ſame
'way, which the Chriſtian
'Church hath uſed ever ſince
'it hath agreed to expreſs her
'Senſe in ſuch *Terms*, which
'were thought moſt proper for
'that purpoſe.

'Why then are *new Explica-*
'*tions* ſtarted, and Diſputes rai-
'ſed

'ſed and carried on ſo warmly
'about them? We had much
'better ſatisfy our ſelves with
'that Language which the
'Church hath received; and is
'expreſſed in the Creeds, than
'go about with new Terms, to
'raiſe new Ferments, eſpecially
'at a time, when our united
'Forces are moſt neceſſary a-
'gainſt our common Adverſa-
'ries. No Wiſe and Good Men
'can be fond of any new In-
'ventions, when the Peace of
'the Church is hazarded by
'them. And it is a great pity,
'that any *new Phraſes*, or Ways
'of Expreſſion, ſhould cauſe un-
'reaſonable Heats among thoſe
'who are really of the ſame
'Mind.

'Mind. *Vid. Pref. p.* 2. and 31. and *Vind. p.* 106.

Q. *But how can these* Unitarians *pretend, that the Doctrine of the Trinity is* contrary *to Reason? How, and in what manner have they attempted to prove it? What Grounds have they for such a Charge as this, of* Contradiction *and* Impossibility?

A. I shall draw up the Charge in their own Words:

'*Theirs*, they say, *is an Accountable and Reasonable Faith,* 'but that of the Trinitarians *is* 'absurd, *and contrary both to* 'Reason *and to it self; and there-*'fore *not only false but impossible.*

But

But wherein lies this *Impossi-*
'*bility?* That they soon tell
'us. *Because we affirm that there*
'*are Three Persons, who are se-*
'*verally and each of them true*
'*God, and yet there is but One*
'*true God. Now*, say they,
'*this is an Error in counting or*
'*numbring, which when stood in,*
'*is of all others the most Brutal*
'*and inexcusable; and not to dis-*
'*cern it, is not to be a Man.* V.
Hist. of the Unit. p. 9. n. 7.
'*For we cannot be mistaken in the*
'*Notion of One and Three; We*
'*are most certain that One is not*
'*Three, and Three are not One.*
V. *Def. of Hist. of Unit.* p. 7.
'*So that here is an Arithmetical, as*
'*well as Grammatical Contradiction.*

For,

'For, *in saying, God the Father,*
'*God the Son, and God the Holy*
'*Ghost, yet not Three Gods, but*
'*One God; a man first distinctly*
'*numbers Three Gods, and then in*
'*summing them up, brutishly says,*
'*not Three Gods, but one God.*
'V. Acts of *Athanasius*, p. 13.
'*Which is plainly, as if a man*
'*should say*, Peter, James, *and*
'John *being three Persons, are one*
'*Man; and One Man is these Three*
'*distinct Persons*, Peter, James
'*and* John. *Is it not now a ridi-*
'*culous Attempt, as well as a bar-*
'*barous Indignity, to go about thus*
'*to make Asses of all Mankind, un-*
'*der pretence of teaching them a*
'*Creed?* V. Notes on *Athanasius's*
Creed, *p.* 11.

'This is their Charge. And 'tis very freely ſpoken, with reſpect, not merely to our Church, but the Chriſtian World; which owns this Creed to be a *juſt and true Explication* of the Doctrine of the Trinity. But there are ſome Creatures as remarkable for their untoward Kicking, as for their Stupidity. *V. Biſhop of* Worceſter's *Defence of the Trinity, p.* 101.

'It is ſtrange boldneſs in men to talk thus of Monſtrous Contradictions in things above their reach. But ſome have ſo uſed themſelves to the Language of *Jargon, Nonſenſe, Contradiction, Impoſſibility*, that it comes from them, as ſome men ſwear, when

'when they do not know it. *Id. p.* 76.

But that the Rudeneſs of theſe *Unitarians*, in thus condemning the Chriſtian Church, may more fully appear, let us proceed very diſtinctly to examine this matter. Do *you* therefore, *Firſt*, give their Objection its full ſtrength, and *then*, through Divine Aſſiſtance, I'll return you my Anſwer.

Q. *Are not* Peter, James, *and* John, *Three diſtinct Humane Perſons?*

A. 'Tis granted.

Q. *Are not* Peter, James, *and* John, *Three distinct different Men?*

A. Who doubts it?

Q. *Is it not a Contradiction to say, That* Peter *is* James, *or that* James *and* John *are* Peter?

A. This likewise must be acknowledg'd.

Q. *Is it not a Contradiction to affirm, That* Peter, James *and* John, *being Three Men, are but One Man? And is it not equally absurd to Declare, That One Man is these Three Men?*

A. Sure I cannot be mistaken in the Notion of *One* and *Three.* But am most certain, That *One* is

is not *Three*, and *Three* are not *One*. But what of all this?

Q. *Observe what follows. Are not the* Father, *the* Son, *and the* Holy Ghost *(according to the* Athanasian *Creed) Three distinct different Divine Persons?*

A. I firmly believe it.

Q. *And if these Three Divine Persons,* Father, Son *and* Holy Ghost, *are* Three *Gods, is it not a Contradiction to say, there is but* One *God?*

A. To say, there are *Three* Gods, and yet but *One* God, is doubtless a Contradiction. But who affirms, There are *Three* Gods?

Q. *Doth not the* Athanasian *Creed?*

A. No. That Creed expressly saith, There are not *Three* Gods, but *One* God.

Q. *If you will not renounce your Reason, I do thus prove it to you.* The Father is God, There is *One.* The Son is God, There is *Two.* The Holy Ghost is God, There is *Three. Are not here* Three *Gods? Do you think me such a Fool, that I cannot count,* One, Two, *and* Three?

A. Thus indeed the *Unitarians* do wisely argue. 'But can these 'Men

'Men of Senſe and Reaſon 'think, that the Point in Con-'troverſy ever was, Whether in 'Numbers, *One could be Three*, 'or *Three One?* If they think ſo, 'I wonder they do not think of 'another thing; which is, the 'begging all *Trinitarians* for '*Fools*; becauſe they cannot 'count *One*, *Two* and *Three*; 'and an *Unitarian* Jury would 'certainly caſt them. One would 'think ſuch Writers had never 'gone beyond *Shop-books*; for 'they take it for granted, that 'all depends upon *Counting*. But 'theſe terrible Charges were 'ſome of the moſt common 'and trite Objections of Infidels. 'St. *Auguſtin* mentions it as ſuch

'when he ſaith;
'*The Infidels ſome-*
'*times ask us, What*
'*do you call the*
'*Father? we an-*
'*ſwer, God. What*
'*the Son? we an-*
'*ſwer, God. What*
'*the Holy Ghoſt?*
'*we anſwer, God.*
'So that here the
'Infidels make
'the ſame Ob-
'jection, and
'draw the very
'ſame Inference.
'*Then*, ſay they,
'*the Father, Son,*
'*and Holy Ghoſt, are three Gods.*
'But what ſaith St. *Auguſtin* to
'this?

Interrogant enim nos aliquando Infideles, & dicunt, Patrem quem dicitis, Deum dicitis? Reſpondemus Deum. Filium quem dicitis, Deum dicitis? Reſpondemus Deum. Spiritum Sanctum quem dicitis, Deum dicitis? Reſpondemus Deum. Ergo inquiunt, Pater & Filius, & Spiritus Sanctus tres ſunt Dii. Reſpondemus, Non. Turbantur, quia non illuminantur, cor clauſum habent quia clavem fidei non habent. *Aug.* in *Joh.* Tr. 39.

'this? Had he no more skill in 'Arithmetick, than to ſay, *there* 'are Three, and yet but One? He 'ſaith plainly *that there are not* 'three Gods. *The Infidels are* 'troubled, *becauſe they are not In-* 'lightned; *their heart is ſhut up,* 'becauſe they are without Faith. 'By which it is plain, he look'd 'on theſe as the proper Obje-'ctions of Infidels, and not of 'Chriſtians.

'But St. *Auguſtin* doth not 'give it over ſo. '*When you begin* '*to count*, ſaith 'he, *you go on*; 'One, Two *and* 'Three. *But when* 'you have reckon'd

Ubi cogitare cœperis, incipis numerare: Ubi numeraveris, quid numeraveris, non potes reſpondere. Pater, Pater eſt; Filius Filius; Spiritus San-

'them,

ctus, Spiritus Sanctus est. Quid sunt isti Tres? non tres Dii? Non. Non tres Omnipotentes? Non, sed Unus Omnipotens. Hoc solo numerum insinuant, quod ad invicem sunt, non quod ad se sunt. *Id. Ib.*

'them, what is it 'you have been 'counting? The 'Father is the Father, the Son the 'Son, and the 'Holy Ghost, the 'Holy Ghost. What 'are these Three? 'Are they not Three Gods? No. 'Are they not Three Almighties? 'No. They are capable of Number 'as to their Relation to each 'other; but not as to their Essence, 'which is but one. V. Bishop *Stillingfleet's* Vindic. of the Trin. p. 58.

'Will men never learn to distinguish between *Numbers* and 'the Nature of *Things*? For 'Three

'*Three* to be *One* is a *Contradi-*
'*ction* in *Numbers*; but whether
'an Infinite Nature can com-
'municate it self to Three *diffe-*
'*rent Subsistences*, without such
'a *Division* as is among Created
'Beings, must not be determin-
'ed by bare *Numbers*, but by
'the Absolute *Perfections* of the
'Divine Nature; which must
'be owned to be above our
'Comprehension. *Id. Serm. on*
1 Tim. 1. 15. *p.* 16.

This is plain and convincing to all Modest Unprejudiced Persons. But it seems our *Unitarians* are not thus to be convinced: Who do further Object; That it is as ridiculous to affirm; That the *Father*, the *Son*, and

the

the *Holy Ghoſt*, being *Three* Perſons, are *One* God; as it is to ſay, that *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, being *Three* Perſons, are *One* Man.

Q. *If I rightly apprehend them, their Argument is this.* Three Human Perſons are Three Men, *Therefore* Three Divine Perſons are Three Gods. *And this they repeat with great Triumph in ſeveral of their Pamphlets. What Anſwer therefore can you return to this?*

'*A.* How can any Man of 'Senſe be ſatisfied with ſuch 'kind of Arguments as theſe? 'One would think, they wrote 'only for ſuch as would take 'their

'their words; they join so much 'Confidence with so very little 'appearance of Reason. For is 'not this great skill in these Mat-'ters, to make such a Parallel 'between *three Persons in the God-'head*, and *Peter*, *James* and *John*? 'Do they think there is no Dif-'ference between an infinitely 'perfect Being, and such finite 'limited Creatures as Individuals 'among Men are? Do they sup-'pose the Divine Nature capable 'of such *Division* and *Separation* 'by Individuals, as Human Na-'ture is?

Q. *No*, they may say, *but ye who hold three Persons must think so.*

'*A.* For

'*A.* For what reaſon? We do 'aſſert Three Perſons, but it is 'on the account of Divine Re-'velation, and in ſuch a man-'ner, as the Divine Nature is 'capable of it. For it is a 'good Rule of *Boethius*, *Talia 'ſunt prædicata, qualia ſubjecta 'permiſerint.* We muſt not ſay 'that there are Perſons in the 'Trinity, but in ſuch a man-'ner as is agreeable to the Di-'vine Nature; and if that be 'not capable of *Diviſion* and *Se-'paration*, then the Perſons muſt 'be in the ſame undivided Eſ-'ſence. *Id. Vind. p.* 102.

'So that herein lies the true 'Solution of the Difficulty, by 'conſidering the difference be-

'tween

'tween the *Humane* and *Divine* 'Nature. The *Humane* Na- 'ture, being *finite*, is capable 'of Diviſion, Multiplication and 'Separation. But the *Divine* 'Nature, being *Infinite*, is not 'capable of any Diviſion, 'Multiplication and Separa- 'tion.

'Now the Divine Eſſence is 'that alone which makes God; '*that* can be but *One*, and 'therefore there can be no more 'Gods than One. But becauſe 'the ſame Scripture, which aſ- 'ſures us of the Unity of the 'Divine Eſſence, doth likewiſe 'join the Son and Holy Ghoſt 'in the ſame Attributes, Ope- 'rations and Worſhip, therefore

'as

'as to the mutual Relations, 'we may reckon *Three*, but as 'to the Divine Eſſence, *that* can 'be no more than *One*.

Here then is the true Reaſon why we affirm; That *Three* Human Perſons, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, are *Three* Men; and yet *Three* Divine Perſons, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, are but *One* God, 'Be-'*cauſe*, The Divine Eſſence is 'not capable of ſuch Diviſion 'and Separation, as the Hu-'man Nature is. *Id. p.* 64, *&* 76.

Q. *This is full, and to the purpoſe; and hath given great Satisfaction*

faction to my Self, as well as others.

But is there nothing further Objected againſt the Doctrine of the B. Trinity, wherein I may be inſtructed by you?

A. There is an Objection lately ſtarted; and I wonder you have not charged me with it.

Q. Pray let me hear it?

A. 'Tis this.

Three Divine Subſtances are Three Gods.

But Three Divine Perſons, are Three Divine Subſtances.

Therefore, *Three Divine Persons are Three Gods.*

This hath most insultingly been repeated by our *Unitarians*, and hath made no little noise in their late Papers and Pamphlets.

Q. *Who revived this old Objection, and how came it now to be brought again upon the Stage?*

'*A.* To understand this matter rightly, we must consider 'that when the *Socinian Pamphlets* first came abroad, some 'years since, a Learned and 'Worthy Person of our Church, 'who

'who had appeared with great
'Vigour and Reaſon againſt
'our Adverſaries of the Church
'of *Rome* in the late Reign
'(which ought not to be for-
'gotten) undertook to defend
'the *Doctrine* of the *Trinity* a-
'gainſt the *Hiſtory of the Uni-
'tarians*, and the *Notes of the*
'Athanaſian *Creed*: But in the
'warmth of Diſputing, and
'out of a deſire to make this
'matter more intelligible, he
'ſuffer'd himſelf to be carried
'beyond the ancient Methods,
'which the Church hath uſed
'to expreſs her Senſe by, ſtill
'retaining the ſame Fundamen-
'tal Article of *three Perſons in
'one undivided Eſſence*, but ex-

'plaining it in such a manner, 'as to make each Person to 'have *a peculiar and proper Sub-* 'stance of his own. V. Bishop of *Worcester's* Pref. to *Vind. of Trin.* p. 20.

Q. *Let me hear the Opinion of that Learned Person more distinctly.*

'A. In short it is this: That 'the same Author asserts, '(1.) *That it is gross* Sabel- 'lianism *to say, That there are* 'not three Personal Minds, or 'Spirits, or Substances. (2.) That 'a distinct substantial Person must 'have a distinct Substance of his 'own, proper and peculiar to his

'own

'*own Perſon.* But he owns, 'that *although there are three di-* 'ſtinct *Perſons, or Minds, each* 'of *whom is diſtinctly and by him-* 'ſelf *God, yet there are not three* 'Gods, *but One God, or one Di-* 'vinity. Which he ſaith, *is in-* 'tirely, *and indiviſibly, and inſe-* 'parably *in three diſtinct Perſons* 'or *Minds.* That *the ſame one* 'Divine *Nature is wholly and in-* 'tirely *communicated by the Eternal* 'Father, *to the Eternal Son, and* 'by *the Father and Son to the* 'Eternal *Spirit, without any Di-* 'viſion *or Separation; and ſo it* 'remains *one ſtill.* V. Modeſt Exam. *p.* 15, 17, 29, 30.

'This is the ſubſtance of this 'new *Explication*, which hath 'raiſed ſuch Flames, that *In-'junctions* from Authority were 'thought neceſſary to ſuppreſs 'them. *V. Pref. p.* 25.

Q. *Pray tell me your Thoughts with freedom. Is this Explication of the Trinity*, by Three diſtinct Infinite Minds and Subſtances, *Orthodox, or not?*

A. Now to deal as impar-'tially in this matter as may 'be, I do not think our Un-'derſtandings one jot helped in 'the Notion of the Trinity by 'this *Hypotheſis*; but that it is 'liable

'liable to as great Difficulties 'as any other.

Q. *You begin then to ſuſpect his Explication.*

'*A.* None ought to be fond 'of it; Or to ſet it againſt the 'general Senſe of others, and the 'currant Expreſſions of Divines 'about theſe Myſteries: Nor to 'call the different Opinions of 'others *Hereſy* or *Nonſenſe*, 'which are provoking Words, 'and tend very much to inflame 'Mens Paſſions, becauſe their 'Faith and Underſtanding are 'both call'd in queſtion, which 'are very tender Things. *V. Pref.* *p.* 41.

Q. *Is it then your Opinion, that this Hypotheſis,* of Three diſtinct Subſtances in the Trinity, *can ſcarce be Defended?*

'*A.* I fear it will be impoſſi-
'ble to clear this *Hypotheſis* as
'to the reconciling *Three Indi-*
'*vidual Eſſences* with *One indivi-*
'*dual Divine Eſſence*; which looks
'too like aſſerting, That there
'are Three Gods, and yet but
'One. *Id. p.* 31.

Q. *Will you pleaſe to explain this more fully, that I may better underſtand it?*

A. 'Can One whole entire
'indiviſible Subſtance be actu-
'ally

'ally divided into Three Sub-
'ſtances? For if every Perſon
'muſt have a peculiar Sub-
'ſtance of his own, and there
'be Three Perſons, there muſt
'be Three peculiar Subſtances.
'And how can there be Three
'peculiar Subſtances, and yet
'but One entire and indiviſible
'Subſtance? I do not ſay, there
'muſt be Three divided Sub-
'ſtances in Place, or ſeparate
'Subſtances; but they muſt be
'divided as three Individuals
'of the ſame kind, which muſt
'introduce a *Specifick Divine Na-*
'*ture*, which I think very incon-
'ſiſtent with the Divine Perfe-
'ctions. *Ib. p.* 29.

Q. *But*

Q. But every Person must have his own proper Substance, and so the Substance must be divided if there be Three Persons.

A. 'That every Person must 'have a *Substance* to support his '*Subsistence* is not denied. But 'the Question is; Whether that 'Substance must be *divided*, or 'not? We say, where the Sub-'stance will bear it, as in Crea-'ted Beings, a Person hath a 'separate Substance; that is, 'the same Nature diversified by 'Accidents, Qualities, and a 'separate Existence. But where 'these things cannot be, there 'the *same Essence* must remain 'undi-

'undivided; but with such 'Relative Properties as cannot 'be confounded. *V. Vind. p.* 105.

'When we speak of *Finite* 'Substances and Persons, we 'are certain that distinct Per-'sons do imply distinct Sub-'stances, because they have a 'distinct and separate Exi-'stence. But this will not hold 'in an *Infinite* Substance, where 'necessary Existence doth be-'long to the *Idea* of it. *Id. p.* 261.

Q. *But say our* Unitarians, 'A *Person is* an Intelligent Be-'ing: *and therefore*, Three Per-'sons must needs be three In-'telligent

'telligent Beings. *So true it* 'is, *that whosoever acknowledges* 'Three *Persons in the Godhead* '(if he takes the word in its pro-'per *sense*) must *admit Three* 'Gods. *Which the Learned Doctor* 'cannot *avoid, who says they are* 'Three distinct Minds, Three 'Substantial Beings, Three In-'telligent Beings: *Therefore un-'avoidably Three Gods. V.* De-'fence of *Hist. of Unit. p.* 5.

A. 'The full and adequate 'Definition of a *Person* (from 'which the *Learned Doctor* doth 'draw his Argument, and the '*Unitarians* their Objection) is 'not this, as they suppose, *viz.* '*A Person is an Intelligent Sub-*

'*stance,*

'*ſtance.* For this is but part
'of the Definition. But the
'full and adequate Definition
'of a *Perſon* is this. *A Perſon*
'*is a compleat Intelligent Subſtance,*
'*with a peculiar manner of Sub-*
'*ſiſtence.* So that, An *Individual*
'*Intelligent Subſtance*, is rather
'ſuppoſed to the making of a
'*Perſon*, than the proper Defi-
'nition of it. For a *Perſon* re-
'lates to ſomething which doth
'diſtinguiſh it from another *In-*
'*telligent Subſtance* in the *ſame*
'*Nature*: and therefore the
'Foundation of it lies in the
'*peculiar manner of Subſiſtence*,
'which agrees to One, and to
'none elſe of the kind; and
'this is it which is called *Per-*
'*ſonality.*

'*ſonality*. Which doth not con-
'ſiſt, I ſay, in a meer *Intelli-*
'*gent Being*, but in that *pecu-*
'*liar manner of Subſiſtence* in that
'Being, which can be in no
'other. So that the proper
'Reaſon of *Perſonality*, where-
'by one Perſon is conſtituted
'and diſtinguiſhed from ano-
'ther, it is the *peculiar manner of*
'*Subſiſtence*, whereby one Per-
'ſon hath ſuch Properties as are
'incommunicable to any other.
V. Vind. p. 260, & 72.

From theſe Premiſes we are inſtructed, Why in the Bleſſed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, are *Three* Perſons, and yet but *One* God. The Reaſon is this,

God

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, are but *One* God; becauſe the Divine Eſſence, Nature, and Subſtance, which alone makes God, is intirely *One*, and is not capable of any Separation, Multiplication or Diviſion. Therefore, there can be no more Gods than *One*. But ſince theſe *Three*, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, have each of them *a peculiar manner of Subſiſtence*; That is, each of theſe *Three* hath *a peculiar Property*, *incommunicable* to any other; Therefore as to their mutual Relations and Perſonalities they are *Three*, but as to the Divine Eſſence and Godhead, they are but *One*.

And

And this is so far from being contrary to Reason, as the *Socinians* pretend, that it is highly Rational to Believe, *a Trinity in Unity.* That is, *Three distinct Persons, and yet but One God.*

As I hope hath been fully proved, and that to your Satisfaction.

Q. *Before you talk too much of Satisfaction, you must Answer me a Question.*

A. What is it?

Q. *Do you believe Transubstantiation?*

A. No,

A. No, I do not. But what's this to the purpose? Will you not allow me to believe the *Trinity*, unless I will believe *Transubstantiation*? And must I renounce the *Trinity*, because I reject *Transubstantiation*?

Q. *The* Unitarians *pretend that the Case is parallel.*

A. Pray give me their Objection in their own words; and then I shall instruct you, what Answer to return to these Men of *Sense* and *Reason.*

Q. 'I *find that the Belief of* 'a *Trinity does Contradict Rea-*

'ſon as much as Tranſubſtantia-
'tion. Now who ſhould not ſcru-
'ple an Opinion perfectly parallel
'with Tranſubſtantiation, and
'equally fruitful in Incongruities
'and Contradictions? Well then,
'if the Trinity implies no leſs
'Contradiction than Tranſubſtan-
'tiation; why can't we ſay, that
'it cannot be contained in Scrip-
'ture? We ſay, Tranſubſtantia-
'tion cannot be found in Scrip-
'ture, becauſe it is a plain Con-
'tradiction to our Reaſon; but
'if the Trinity be alſo a plain Con-
'tradiction to our Reaſon, why
'ſhan't we be allowed to ſay, that
'it cannot be contained in Scrip-
'ture? V. Def. of Brief Hiſt. of
'Unit. p. 4, and 6. But oh!

'were

'*were the Press as free for the* 'Unitarians, *as 'tis for other* '*Protestants*; *how easily would* '*they make it appear, that the* '*Follies and Contradictions so justly* '*charged on Transubstantiation*, '*are neither for Number*, '*Consequence, nor Clearness, any* '*way comparable to those implied* '*in the* Athanasian *Creed*; *and* '*that the Trinity hath the same*, '*and no other, Foundation with* '*Transubstantiation? So that we* '*must of necessity admit Both, or* '*neither.* V. Acts of *Athanasius*, 'p. 16.

This is the Sum of what they Object. To which I expect an *Answer* according to your Promise.

A. As preparatory to a juſt Anſwer, I cannot but obſerve, how exactly theſe *Socinians* do Symbolize with the *Papiſts*. 'For as on the one hand, they 'of the *Church* of *Rome* are ſo 'fondly and obſtinately addict-'ed to their own Errors, how 'miſhappen and monſtrous ſo-'ever, that rather than the Di-'ctates of their Church, how 'abſurd ſoever, ſhould be cal-'led in queſtion, they will que-'ſtion the truth even of *Chri-'ſtianity* it ſelf: and if we will 'not take in *Tranſubſtantiation*, 'and admit it to be a *neceſſary* '*Article* of the *Chriſtian Faith*, 'they grow ſo ſullen and deſpe-

'rate

'ſperate that they matter not
'what becomes of all the reſt:
'And rather than not have
'their Will of us in that which
'is *Controverted*, they will give
'up that which by their own
'confeſſion is an *undoubted Ar-*
'*ticle* of the *Chriſtian Faith*,
'and not controverted on ei-
'ther Side: In like manner;
Theſe *Unitarians* are ſo impertinently zealous in their deſigns againſt the *Trinity*, that rather than admit that *Fundamental Article* of the *Chriſtian Faith*, they will plead for *Tranſubſtantiation*; and this even contrary to the Light and Dictate of their own Conſcience.
'For the *Socinians* are hear-

'ty Enemies to *Tranſubſtan-*
'*tiation*, and have expoſed the
'Abſurdity of it with great ad-
'vantage. V. *Archbiſhop* Til-
lotſon's *Serm.* on 1 *Tim.* II. 5.
p. 30.

Q. *Have you nothing further to ſay in this matter?*

A. You muſt give me leave to add; 'I did not expect to 'have found this *Parallel* ſo 'often inſiſted upon, without 'an Anſwer to *Two Dialogues* 'purpoſely written on that Sub-'ject, at a time when the Do-'ctrine of the *Trinity* was uſed 'as an Argument to bring in '*Tranſubſtantiation*, as that is now

'alledged

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'now alledged for casting off the 'other.

'But I must do them that 'right to tell the World, 'That at that time a *Socinian* 'Answer was written to those '*Dialogues*, which I saw, and 'wished it might be Printed, 'that the World might be satis-'fied about it and them. But 'they thought fit to forbear. 'And in all their late Pamphlets 'where this *Parallel* is so often 'repeated, there is but once, that 'I can find, any notice taken of 'those *Dialogues*, and that in a 'very superficial manner: for 'the main Design and Scope of 'them is past over. *V. Vind. of Trinit. p.* 287.

And I must needs remind these *Unitarians*, that it is not fair nor Scholar-like, so insultingly to repeat the *Parallel* between the *Trinity* and *Transubstantiation*, which hath been so fully confuted in those *Two Dialogues*.

Q. *You promised an Answer, and you bring me a Challenge: Which I shall send to the* Unitarians. *Who indeed are obliged, in point of Honour, to give Satisfaction, by a just Reply to those Two Dialogues.*

A. If they would consult their Reputation, and credit their Cause, they ought not to defer it,

it. For those *Two Dialogues* were writ by an Author, 'Who (to 'give you the very words of 'an *Unitarian*) hath all the Pro-'perties, for which an Adversary 'may be either feared, or Reve-'renced. He understands perfectly 'the Doctrine of the Church; and 'the Points in Question. He will 'commit no oversights through Ig-'norance, Haste, or Inadversion. 'He is too experienced and Judi-'cious to hazard his Cause, as 'others have lately done, on the 'Success of a Half-thought Hy-'pothesis, a Crude Invention, a 'pretty New Querk. In a word, 'we can only say of him, since 'there is no Remedy, Contenti 'simus hoc Catone. *V. Consid.*

ſid. &c. *in a Letter to* H. H. *p.* 3.

Such an Adverſary as this is worthy the Pens of their Ableſt Writers. If therefore at this Juncture, when the Preſs is open, theſe *Unitarians* ſhall not Anſwer thoſe *Dialogues*, I muſt with freedom tell them, It is not becauſe they *dare* not, but becauſe they *cannot*.

Q. *Leaving theſe* Unitarians *to defend their Parallel at their leaſure; let me now hear* your *Anſwer which you were pleaſed to Promiſe.*

'*A.* I ſhall endeavour to re-
'turn a more particular *Anſwer*
'to

'to this *Objection*; and such a
'One as I hope will satisfy eve-
'ry considerate and unprejudi-
'ced Mind, that after all this
'confidence and swaggering of
'theirs, there is by no means
'equal Reason either for the *re-*
'*ceiving*, or for the *rejecting* of
'these two *Doctrines* of the *Tri-*
'*nity* and *Transubstantiation*. Vid.
Archbishop *Tillotson*'s Serm. on
1 *Tim.* II. 5. *p.* 30.

Q. *First*; *Let us examine, whether there be equal Reason for the Belief of these Two Doctrines?*

'*A.* If this Suggestion of
'theirs be of any force, we
'must

'must ſuppoſe that there is 'equal Evidence and Proof 'from *Scripture* for theſe *Two* 'Doctrines.

Q. *How do you prove there is not?*

'*A.* From the Confeſſion of 'our Adverſaries themſelves. 'For ſeveral Learned *Writers* of 'the *Church* of *Rome* have free-'ly acknowledged, that *Tran-'ſubſtantiation* can neither be di-'rectly proved, nor neceſſarily 'concluded from *Scripture*. But 'this the *Writers* of the *Chriſtian* 'Church did never acknowledge 'concerning the *Trinity*, and the 'Divinity of *Chriſt*; but have 'always

'always appealed to the clear 'and undeniable Teſtimonies 'of *Scripture* for the Proof of 'theſe *Doctrines*. And then the 'whole force of the Objection 'amounts to this; That if I 'am bound to Believe what I 'am ſure God ſays, though I 'cannot Comprehend it; then 'I am bound by the ſame rea-'ſon to believe the greateſt Ab-'ſurdity in the World, though 'I have no manner of aſſurance 'of any *Divine Revelation* con-'cerning it.

Q. *You think then, that as there is not equal reaſon for the Believing, ſo neither is there equal reaſon for the rejecting of theſe Two Doctrines.* 'A. This

'*A.* This the *Objection* ſup-
'poſes; Which yet cannot be
'ſuppoſed but upon one or
'both of theſe Two Grounds.
'Either

'1. Becauſe theſe Two Do-
'ctrines are equally *Incompre-*
'*henſible*. Or,

'2. Becauſe they are equally
'loaded with *Abſurdities* and *Con-*
'*tradictions*.

Q. *As to the Firſt; Is not the Trinity as Incomprehenſible as Tranſubſtantiation, and as ſuch equally to be rejected?*

'*A.* It

'*A.* It is no good ground of '*rejecting* any *Doctrine*, merely 'becauſe it is *Incomprehenſible*; 'as I have abundantly ſhewed 'already. But beſides this, 'there is a wide difference be-'tween plain matters of *Senſe*, 'and *Myſteries* concerning God. 'And it does by no means 'follow, that if a man do once 'admit any thing concerning 'God which he cannot *com-'prehend*, he hath no reaſon af-'terwards to Believe what he 'himſelf *Sees*. This is a moſt 'unreaſonable and deſtructive 'way of arguing, becauſe it 'ſtrikes at the Foundation of 'all Certainty, and ſets every

'Man

'Man at Liberty to deny the 'moſt plain and evident *Truths* 'of *Chriſtianity*, if he may not 'be humoured in having the 'abſurdeſt things in the World 'admitted for true. The next 'ſtep will be to perſuade us, 'that we may as well deny 'the Being of *God*, becauſe 'his Nature is *incomprehenſible* 'by our *Reaſon*, as deny *Tran-* 'ſubſtantiation becauſe it evi- 'dently *contradicts* our *Senſes*. *Id. Ib.* p. 32.

Q. *As Tranſubſtantiation evidently contradicts our Senſes; So theſe* Unitarians *pretend, that the Trinity as evidently contradicts our Reaſon. And then*, ſay they, *are*

are not these Two Doctrines loaded with the like Absurdities and Contradictions?

'*A.* So far from this, that 'the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, 'as it is delivered in the *Scriptures*, and hath already been 'explained, hath no Absurdity 'or Contradiction either involved in it, or necessarily consequent upon it. But the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* is 'big with all imaginable Absurdity and Contradiction. As the *Unitarians* themselves do acknowledge: And therefore I am not now concerned to prove it.

Q. However you are concerned to defend the Trinity. *The Contradictions and Abſurdities of which (as theſe* Unitarians *pretend) are as great as thoſe of Tranſubſtantiation.*

A. I cannot help their Pretences. But if their Prejudices will allow them to examine my Reaſons, I ſhall yet further endeavour their Conviction. And that I may do it the more effectually, I ſhall deſire *You* (as their Advocate, and in their Name) to produce thoſe Abſurdities which appear the moſt dreadful.

'Q. *I ſhall reduce all to theſe*
'*Two, which comprehend the reſt.*

'1. How there can be Three
'Perſons, and but One
'God.
'2. How theſe can agree in
'a Third, and not agree
'among themſelves.

'*For the* First, *it ſeems very*
'*abſurd, that there ſhould be*
'*Three Perſons really diſtinct,*
'*whereof every one is God, and*
'*yet there ſhould not be Three*
'*Gods. For nothing is more Con-*
'*tradictious, than to make Three*
'*not to be Three; or Three to be*
'*but One.*

'*A.* I hope now you will 'give me leave to make an 'Anſwer to your Difficulty, 'as diſtinct as poſſible.

'It is very true, that ac- 'cording to Arithmetick, *Three* 'cannot be One, *nor One Three.* 'But we muſt diſtinguiſh be- 'tween the bare Numeration, 'and the Things numbred. 'The repetition of *three Units*, 'certainly makes *three* diſtinct 'Numbers; but it doth not 'make *Three Perſons* to be '*Three Natures.* And therefore 'as to the Things themſelves, 'we muſt go from the bare '*Numbers* to conſider their Na- 'ture.

'We

'We do not say, that *Three* 'Persons are but *One* Person, 'or that *One* Nature is *Three* 'Natures; but that there are '*Three Persons in One Nature.* 'If therefore One Individual 'Nature be communicable to 'Three Persons, there is no 'appearance of Absurdity in this 'Doctrine. And on the other 'side, it will be impossible 'there should be three Gods, 'where there is one and the 'same Individual Nature. For 'Three Gods must have Three 'several Divine Natures, since 'it is the Divine Essence which 'makes a God. *V. Two Dial. Part. II. p.* 24.

But of this there hath been given ſo full an Account in this *Collection*, that thoſe who ſhall ſeriouſly and attentively conſider it, will, I hope, through God's Bleſſing, receive Satisfaction.

'Q. *But yet you have not* 'Anſwer'd *the other great Diffi-* 'culty *in Point of Reaſon*, viz. 'That thoſe Things which a- 'gree or diſagree in a Third, 'muſt agree or diſagree One 'with the Other. *And therefore* 'if *the Father be God, the Son* 'God, *and the Holy Ghoſt God;* 'then *the Father muſt be Son* 'and *Holy Ghoſt, and the Son* 'and *Holy Ghoſt muſt be the* 'Father.

'Father. If not, then they are 'really the same, and really di-'stinct; the same as to Essence, 'distinct as to Persons; and so 'they are the same, and not 'the same, which is a Contra-'diction.

'A. Now I think you have 'drawn out the most refined 'Spirits of *Socinianism*, to make 'the Doctrine of the *Trinity* 'and *Transubstantiation* parallel, 'because, you say, it implies 'a Contradiction; Which is 'the neareſt Parallel you have 'yet offered at. But this ter-'rible Argument is grounded 'on this mistaken Supposition, 'viz. *That the Divine Essence is*

'*no more capable of communicating*
'*it self to Three distinct Per-*
'*sons, than any Created Being is.*
'The Reason of that *Axiom* be-
'ing, That Created Things, by
'reason of their finite Nature,
'cannot diffuse or communicate
'themselves to more than one;
'and therefore those which agree
'in a Third, must agree together.
'But supposing it possible that
'the same finite Nature could
'extend it self to several Indi-
'viduals, it would be presently
'answered; The *Axiom* did hold
'only, where they did adequate-
'ly and reciprocally agree, and
'not where they did agree on-
'ly in *Essence*, but differ'd in
'the manner of *Subsistence*. For
'where

'where a different manner of 'Subſiſtence is ſuppoſed poſſible, 'in the ſame Individual Na- 'ture, the Agreement in that 'cannot take away that Diffe- 'rence which is conſiſtent with 'it; which we attribute to the 'unlimitedneſs and perfection of 'the Divine Nature.

Q. '*But you can bring no other 'Inſtance but the thing in Queſtion; 'and therefore this is a* Petitio 'Principii, *or taking that for 'granted which is in Diſpute.*

A. 'I do not think it to be 'ſo, where the Reaſon is aſ- 'ſigned from the peculiar Pro- 'perties of the Divine Nature, 'to

'to which there can be no Parallel. And I think it very 'unreasonable in the *Socinians*, 'to send us to Created Beings 'for the Rules and Measures 'of our Judgment, concerning 'a Being acknowledg'd to be Infinite.

Q. '*Are not the Divine Persons Infinite, as well as the Divine Nature? And therefore as 'Created Persons do take in the 'whole Nature, so Infinite Persons will do the Infinite Nature.*

A. 'No question, but the '*Persons* are Infinite in regard of 'the *Nature* which is so; but if 'an

'an Infinite Nature be communicable to more Persons than 'One, every such Person cannot 'appropriate the whole Nature 'to it self.

Q. 'If the Difference be on the 'account of Infinity, then there must 'be an infinite number of Persons 'in the Divine Essence.

A. 'I answer; that infinite-'ness of Number is no Perfe-'ction; and as to the Number 'of Persons, we follow not our 'own Conjectures, nor the Au-'thority of the Church; but 'Divine Revelation, which hath 'assured us, that there is but 'One God, and yet there are

'Three

'*Three that are One.* Which 'depends not merely on the 'Place of St. *John*, but the 'Form of Baptiſm is remark-'able to this purpoſe; which 'joyns together *the Father*, *the* '*Son*, and *the Holy Ghoſt*; with-'out any other diſtinction be-'ſides that of Order and Rela-'tion: And it is againſt the 'Fundamental Deſign of Chri-'ſtianity, to joyn any Created 'Beings together with God in 'ſo ſolemn an Act of Religi-'on. And St. *Paul* joyns them 'together in his Benediction: '*The Grace of our Lord Jeſus* '*Chriſt*, *and the Love of God*, '*and the Communion of the Holy* '*Ghoſt be with you all. Amen.*

'2 Cor.

'2 Cor. 12. 14. From whence 'the Christian Church hath al-'ways believed a *Trinity* of *Per-'sons* in the *Unity* of the *Divine 'Nature*. V. *Two Dial.* Part II. p. 31.

THE

THE CLOSE.

'THE *Unitarians* themselves cannot deny, that many Things certainly *are*, the particular manner of whose Existence we can neither Comprehend nor Explain. *Therefore*, though the particular Manner of the *Existence* of these Three *Differences* or *Persons* in the *Divine Nature*, expressed in Scripture by the Names of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, is incom-

'*incomprehensible* by our *finite* 'Understandings, and *inexplica-* '*ble* by us; that is, though the 'manner of the Union and 'Distinction between them, is 'above our Reach and Compre- 'hension; yet considering the 'infinite Perfections of the Di- 'vine Nature, which are so far 'above our reach, God may 'justly oblige us to believe those 'Things concerning Himself, 'which we are not able to Com- 'prehend.

'And of this, I hope, I have 'given a sufficient Account in 'the foregoing Discourse.

FINIS.

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